

Andi Susilo, M.Pd

TEACHER TALKING TIME IN EFL CONTEXT

*Theories and Practical Ideas on Using
Communicative Language to Engage
Students in the Classroom Interaction*

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Theories and Practical Ideas on Using
Communicative Language

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PREFACE

I am grateful, first of all, to Allah SWT for His Mercy and Blessing. Second, the writer's sincere gratitude also goes to some people: the chairwoman of STAIN Ponorogo, head of P3M, head of Tarbiyah, and head of English department who have kindly guided and allowed me to profit from their advice in writing this textbook.

This textbook is designed for English students or teachers who teach or will teach English as a foreign language that need to re-learn or grasp some teaching methodologies in order to explore appropriate teaching methods for their own classroom context. It provides adequate theories and practical ideas on how to engage students in such communicative interaction in the classroom. Moreover, this reshapes the readers' thought how to expose their effective language optimally in the classroom and provide a wide chance of opportunity for students to involve actively using the target language.

In accord to this, the first chapter of this textbook highlights the nature of teaching English in EFL context. It provides the readers with the nature of approaches and methods in ELT as a basis of teacher's language exposure, current communicative language teaching and its strategies and activities. Chapter two discusses learner learning styles & strategies. Additionally, chapter three over views teacher talking time. It highlights the nature of teacher talk and the

features of communicative teacher talk. Meanwhile, chapter four presents basic classroom techniques.

In particular, the next chapter discusses teacher talking time. Some features of teachers' classroom language that are regarded as communicative teacher talks are presented in greater detail; they are questioning strategies, content feedback, speech modification, and negotiation of meaning. They are presented respectively followed with examples. Finally, this text book presents the theory of schemata and gives practical ideas on how to build students' schemata.

My thanks are kindly extended to my wife, Restu Mufanti, and my daughter, Meutea Orchidta Asyraf Susilo, for graciously encouraging me to be hard working. I am also thankful to my teaching colleagues and my students for any motivation and assistance.

Lastly, it is expected that this textbook provides advantages to the readers. Finally, I feel indebted to all of those who have offered positive comments and criticism for the improvement of this textbook.

Ponorogo, October 2014
Writers,

Andi Susilo, M.Pd

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1

TEACHING ENGLISH IN EFL CONTEXT.....

A. The Nature of Approaches and Methods in ELT

The field of foreign or second language teaching (e.g. TESL, TEFL, or TESOL) has undergone rapid fluctuation and shift over the years. We notice that some essential changes have been underlining the teaching practices of English in the classroom in order to meet with students' proficiency levels, preferences, as well as the need of achieving learning objectives. Some important areas of changes in English language teaching (ELT) cover instructional goals and objectives, syllabus and lesson planning, language teaching methodology and instructional materials, assessment and evaluation. To cope with the students' need in learning, it is suggested that the English teachers are always aware and cognizant with the changes. They are required not only to have adequate knowledge of the areas above, but also to be able to design and deliver the instruction well to help students succeed in learning.

In term of language teaching methodology, it vacillates between two types of approaches: getting students to analyze a language (i.e. to learn its

grammatical rules) versus getting students to use a language (i.e. to speak and understand it). It cannot be denied that some teachers are keen on getting the students to always memorize a lot of new words discretely, learn the language forms frequently, ask them to produce language correctly and do a series of monotonous tasks in the classroom. However, recently, language teaching methodology has widely been tailored to get students to be able to use language fluently and communicatively due to the ever-growing need for good communication skills in English.

Briefly speaking, language teaching methodology is concerned with approaches, methods, and techniques of how language is learned and taught. In order to provide sufficient knowledge on understanding the application of some kinds of approaches, methods, and technique in ELT, it is essential to overview the definition and distinctions of those terms as well as discuss the core of approaches in language teaching. This is due to the fact that many of us may have insufficient knowledge on those terms whether they are synonymous or different.

Richards and Rodgers provide definition of the term "method" in which it encompasses approach—a theory of the nature of language and a theory of the nature of language learning; design—the general and specific objectives of the method, a syllabus model, types of learning and teaching activities, learner roles, teacher roles, and the roles of instructional materials; and procedure—classroom techniques, practices, and

behaviors observed when the method is occupied or employed.¹

Particularly, it can be highlighted that an approach is viewed as an overall theory about learning language, which then lends it-self to “approaching” language teaching and learning in a certain manner. A method is often viewed as a series of procedures or activities used to teach language in a certain way. Meanwhile, a technique is usually seen as one activity or procedure used within a plan for teaching. The reality is, however, that language-teaching professionals often find themselves in disagreement over these terms.

In most case, the terms of approach, method, and technique are frequently used interchangeably by teachers in the teaching practices. Depending on how one is defining the term and the circumstances in which the term is being used, an approach may become a method or a method may become a technique and vice versa. In order to avoid misconception and understanding among readers or students, it is essential to sum up those terms clearly.

The following table provides important summary to seek the light on the distinction of those terms.

¹ Richards, J.C. & Rodgers, T.S. *Approaches and methods in language teaching (2nd ed.)* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

Teacher Talking Time In Efl Context

Approach	Method	Technique
A certain model or research paradigm	A set of ways	A set of steps/activities
A set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning	An overall plan for the orderly presentation of language materials based on the selected approach	Implementation – taking place in a classroom on the basis of the selected approach and method
The broadest term	More specific term than an approach	The narrowest term

Fundamentally, adopted from language acquisition theory, approaches to language teaching are derived from three models /views: behaviorist / structuralist, innatist /nativist, and interactionist. The behavioral approach focuses on the immediately perceptible aspects of linguistic behavior – the publicly observable responses – and the relationships or associations between those responses and events in the world surrounding them. In other words, the behaviorist model views language learning as a behavior change through habit formation, conditioned by the presence of stimuli and strengthened through practice and selective reinforcement (punishment or reward). In short, the behaviorist model deals with imitation, practice, reinforcement/feedback, and habit

² (Brown, 2007)

formation following a stimulus-response model. One example of a behaviorist - based instructional approach is the audio-lingual approach.

Meanwhile, the nativist /innatist approach is derived from the fundamental assertion that language acquisition is innately determined, that we are born with a genetic capacity that predisposes us to a systematic perception of language around us, resulting in the construction of internalized system of language.³ The nativist /innatist model sees language as rule-based and generative in nature in which it is processed and produced through complicated cognitive processes and mechanisms. The underlying assumptions of this model is that people possess an innate mental capacity for language which has been biologically programmed for language learning called Language Acquisition Device (LAD). This is often supported by the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) firstly put forward by Lenneberg. He argued that a critical point for language acquisition occurs around puberty. One example of an innatist-based instructional approach is the natural approach.

Different from the two previous approaches, the interactionist model focuses on how language and cognitive developments take place within the key contexts of interaction. One of the most influential theories within this model is called Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) defined by Vygotsky. It is believed

³ (Brown, 2007)

that learning can occur only when someone is presented with a new task or knowledge that is just beyond his/her present level like Krashen's input hypothesis ($i + 1$). In accordance to this notion, learning is about bridging the gap between actual and potential development through interaction with an adult or a more competent peer. The example of an interactionist-based instructional approach is communicative language teaching approaches (e.g. cooperative language learning, content-based, and task-based learning).

In case of the application of approach in ELT, Norland and Pruett-Said confirm that there is no one best approach because the circumstances and needs of ESL students vary so greatly.⁴ Even within certain group, there may not be one best approach. To choose approaches that are the most appropriate for the students, some important variables should be taken into account by teachers. They are suggested to regard some essential questions when they apply particular approaches, as follows:

- ✚ How old are they?
- ✚ What are the students' needs and wants?
- ✚ How much time do they have to learn English?
- ✚ Have they studied English or another language before?
- ✚ How well do they know their own language?

⁴ Norland, Deborah L and Pruett-Said, Terry, A *Kaleidoscope of Models and Strategies for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*, (USA: Libraries Unlimited, 2006), x

- ↓ Where will they use their English?
- ↓ Will they need their English for school or for work?

In addition, to be professional and effective teachers, they must be aware of the different theories and approaches that have developed. Most effective teachers choose from a number of approaches, methods, and techniques to create a learning environment that fits the needs of their students. They put these approaches together to create a varied syllabus and an optimum learning experience. Sometimes this is referred to as selective eclecticism. It may also be referred to as an organic or integrated syllabus or curriculum. This does not mean that teachers can just put together a bunch of activities to create a plan. Good teachers must always consider what the results of the instructions they conduct will be and how these will form a long-term, effective program to teach another language.⁵

Furthermore, EFL teachers should be aware of the approach they occupy. Although it is true that some approaches become out dated, as practitioners find that they do not do a very good job of meeting either teachers' or students' needs, most have some strong points about them that tend to be borrowed to use with other approaches and thus have become a part of contemporary teaching approaches.

In addition, there is a tendency in education for the popularity of approaches to swing back and forth.

⁵ Norland and Pruett-Said, *Ibid.*, 2006, x-xi

Thus, an approach that may be popular one decade may find itself out a favor in the next. This makes it all the more important that teachers be aware of the many approaches, with their strengths and weaknesses, so that they can use this knowledge to create an effective curriculum.

B. Current Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The demand for good communication skills in English has triggered a huge innovation for English teaching. Within the last quarter century, communicative language teaching (CLT) has been put forth around the world as the “new” or “innovative” way to teach English as a second or foreign language. For example, perhaps, the majority of language teachers or student-teachers, when asked to identify the methodology they employ in their classrooms, identify “communicative” as the methodology of choice. When they are pressed to give a detailed account of what they mean by “communicative”, however, explanations vary widely.

What do you understand by CLT? Does Communicative Language Teaching or CLT mean teaching conversation, an absence of grammar in a course, or an emphasis on open-ended discussion activities as the main features of a course? In accord to answer these questions and even broaden our view about CLT, this chapter attempts to highlight the framework of CLT and provides practical activities to implement it in the classroom.



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He began his English teaching career in the University of 17 Agustus 1945 Banyuwangi (2006-2011) and became a chairman of English Department in 2010. Currently, he is a tenured English Lecturer at STAIN Ponorogo (College of Islamic Studies), East Java, Indonesia, since January 2011. Some courses taught are TEFL, Writing, Psycholinguistics, and ESP.

His research interests include ELT Methodology, ESP and EFL/ESL Writing. In accord to those, some articles have been published, such as "Enhancing the Students' Writing Achievement in EFL Context through Learning Community Technique, *Progressif*, vol. 4, 12, 2007; "Improving the Students' Writing through Jigsaw Model," *Humaniora*, vol. 6, 2, 2009; "Effective Use of Questioning Behaviors to Trigger Dynamic Classroom Interaction," *Proceeding on ELITE International conference*, Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University, 2013; "Academic controversy model as an alternative strategy for teaching speaking at university level," *Cendekia*, vol.11, 2, 2013; "Students' Schemata Activation in Extensive Reading at Stain Ponorogo," *Kodifikasia*, vol. 7, 1, 2013; and "Employing Effective Teachers' Language to Create Communicative Interaction in EFL Context," *Cendekia*, 2014.

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